

- REMARKS / ARGUMENTS -

Claims 1 to 14 remain pending in the present application.

The Examiner identified two (2) distinct inventions because, allegedly, the inventions are not so linked to form a single general inventive concept. The following two (2) inventions were identified: Group I comprising claims 1 to 14; and Group II comprising claims 15 to 27.

Since the Applicant must elect one invention, Group I (claims 1 to 14), is hereby provisionally elected without traverse. Claims 15 to 27 (Group II) are thus provisionally withdrawn. This is not an admission that the Applicant agrees with the Examiner's finding that the two (2) identified inventions do not have at least one common inventive feature and this election is therefore provisional. The Applicant reserves the right to file divisional applications or request a rejoinder for the non-elected invention.

It is submitted, therefore, that the claims are in condition for allowance. Examination on the merits is respectfully requested and allowance of claims 1 to 14 at an early date is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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